

Chronic Hepatitis B Virus Case Definition

Information for Michigan Providers

The case definition for chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) was recently updated. However, it is very important to remember that in Michigan only the HBsAg-positive results are reportable. All HBsAg-positive test results in a pregnant woman must be reported to the local health department within 24 hours of diagnosis or discovery. If a pregnant woman who is known to be chronically infected with HBV is not tested for HBsAg, we may miss the opportunity to appropriately treat her infant at birth. For the Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program, it is critical that all pregnant women are routinely tested for HBsAg during an early prenatal visit (e.g., first trimester) in each pregnancy, even if they have been previously vaccinated or tested.

2007 Case Definition Update

New Chronic Hepatitis B Virus 2007 Case Definition

(www.cdc.gov/epo/dphsi/print/hepatitisbcurrent.htm)

Clinical description:

Persons with chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection may have no evidence of liver disease or may have a spectrum of disease ranging from chronic hepatitis to cirrhosis or liver cancer. Persons with chronic infection may be asymptomatic.

Laboratory criteria for diagnosis:

- IgM antibodies to hepatitis B core antigen (anti-HBc) negative AND a positive result on one of the following tests: hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg), hepatitis B e antigen (HBeAg), or hepatitis B virus (HBV) DNA
- OR
- HBsAg positive or HBV DNA positive or HBeAg positive two times at least 6 months apart (Any combination of these tests performed 6 months apart is acceptable.)

Case classification:

Confirmed: A case that meets either laboratory criteria for diagnosis

Probable: A case with a single HBsAg positive or HBV DNA positive or HBeAg positive lab result when no IgM anti-HBc results are available

Comment: Multiple laboratory tests indicative of chronic HBV infection may be performed simultaneously on the same patient specimen as part of a “hepatitis panel”. Testing performed in this manner may lead to seemingly discordant results, e.g., HBsAg-negative AND HBV DNA-positive. For the purposes of this case definition, any positive result among the three laboratory tests mentioned above is acceptable, regardless of other testing results. Negative HBeAg results and HBV DNA levels below positive cutoff level do not confirm the absence of HBV infection.

References: Division of Viral Hepatitis. Guidelines for Viral Hepatitis Surveillance and Case Management. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. January 2005.